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U.S. Department of State Middle East and North Africa Environment, Science, Technology & Health Hub Newsletter

ISSUE 4

MARCH / APRIL 2014

Earth Day 2014 Across the MENA Region

April 22, 2014 marked the 44th annual Earth Day, and U.S. missions across the region celebrated with a variety of environmental activities ranging from clean-up campaigns to online outreach to encourage environmental awareness and action.

U.S. Ambassador to Lebanon Highlights USG Efforts to Protect Lebanon's National Treasure...the Cedar!

"This isn't just about saving trees; it's about building an economy and providing jobs." That's the message Ambassador Hale stressed during a video produced by the Press Section at U.S. Embassy Beirut that featured Ambassador Hale, USAID Country Director Azza El Abed, members of the Lebanese Armed Forces, and many others. The four-year, \$11.9 Million project is funded by USAID to promote reforestation, prevent wildfires and protect communities around Lebanon that depend on trees. You can find the video on the Embassy Facebook page or on you tube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DxrbFsJYOxc>

Embassy Tel Aviv...Giving Nature a Helping Hand for Earth Day 2014

Embassy Tel Aviv participated in an Earth Day community clean-up event on April 29. Deputy Chief of Mission Bill Grant and 25 U.S. Embassy volunteers gave a helping hand to nature, together with Israel's Nature and Park Authority, by picking up litter and debris in the Yarkon River area. The three-kilometer walk and clean-up stretched along the river between Tel-Afek and the Hayarkon National park and helped reinforce the importance of sustainability, reminding the many young passersby that recycling and leaving "no trace" will ensure everyone can continue to enjoy Israel's natural beauty for generations to come. You can also watch the video at :

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzbQhyan6SY&list=UUhu9tJ-ESvkzHwbDYx4etyg>



Photo courtesy of Embassy Tel Aviv

Clean Up Cairo: IRC Cairo Partners with Local NGO on Earth Day

On April 22, The Information Resource Center (IRC) Cairo partnered with the Friends of Environment and Development Association (FEDA) to clean up a historic area of Islamic Cairo. Several dozen IRC members and FEDA staff, wearing IRC t-shirts and armed with trash grabbers and garbage bags, spent the day picking up debris and making the area a cleaner place for both residents and tourists. Citizens of the area were curious about the event and both adults and elementary school students stopped what they were doing to participate. Local newspapers and television covered the event, with some journalists helping to pick up garbage as well. This Earth Day community clean-up helped bring awareness to environmental issues, while also reinforcing that we have a shared responsibility to make our communities healthy and prosperous.



IRC Volunteers and FEDA Staff get ready to clean the streets of Islamic Cairo. Photo courtesy of Embassy Cairo

Regional ESTH Officer Promotes Environmental Awareness on Jordan's Local Radio

To celebrate Earth Day and promote environmental awareness among the Jordanian public, the MENA Region Hub Officer was interviewed for a morning talk show on Radio Jordan. The discussion covered the history of Earth Day, the 2014 theme of Green Cities, and U.S. State Department efforts to ensure facilities are energy and water efficient. Radio Jordan is the oldest English-language station in Jordan with online listeners across the region.



Photo courtesy of Embassy Amman

Earth Day in the United States: Secretary of State Remarks

In his Earth Day 2014 remarks, U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry highlighted this year's Earth Day theme of Green Cities. Roughly 5.2 billion people are projected to live in the world's urban communities by 2050. As Secretary Kerry noted, building codes and electricity requirements, public transportation systems, and land management will help determine whether we all meet the global challenge of urbanization and climate change. The Department of State is committed to doing its part to help bring about greener cities around the world. The State Department is working to deploy renewable energy technologies; build recycling infrastructure; safeguard wildlife, forests and wetlands; and help communities better protect their water resources. Secretary Kerry also underscored the urgent need to take action to care for and improve the state of our oceans. The Secretary will host an international "Our Ocean" conference in Washington in June.

For the Secretary's full Earth Day remarks visit: <http://www.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/04/225054.htm>

To learn about the Our Ocean conference visit: <http://www.state.gov/e/oes/ocns/opa/2014conf/>

Secretary Kerry: Earth Day's history is proof that the steadfast determination of millions is powerful enough to change the course of history. We have our own history to write together, cleaning up global communities and protecting natural resources for generations to come.

Green Tip:
Instead of using
paper or
Styrofoam coffee
cups and plastic
water bottles, use
reusable bottles
and mugs.

**Make every day
Earth Day!**

For ideas about how to make every day **Earth Day, visit**

<http://www.epa.gov/epahome/home.htm>

<http://www.epa.gov/earthday/tips.htm>

Learn more about Green Cities at:

<http://www.earthday.org/greencities/learn/>

The MENA ESTH Hub is now online! Check out the hub's webpage at

<http://jordan.usembassy.gov/esth.html>

Israeli Water Experts Celebrate World Water Day in Louisiana

Ran Molho, Head of the Sea of Galilee Regional Drainage and Environmental Authority in Israel and 16 other water specialists from around the world were selected by the International Visitors Leadership Program (IVLP) to visit five sites across the U.S. to learn about U.S. efforts to protect and manage this essential resource. The program facilitates an exchange of ideas on critical topics such as cooperative strategies for trans-boundary water resources and climate change resiliency programs. On March 22, the United Nation's World Water Day, Ran and some of his colleagues participated in a 'swamp tour' looking at water quality and wetlands protection in Louisiana -- an area prone to flooding and degradation of fresh water resources. *Ran Molho (second from right) and his IVLP colleagues spend World Water Day on a swamp tour in Louisiana learning about wetlands protection.*



President of Jordan University of Science and Technology Visits U.S. National Laboratories in New Mexico



From March 7-9, Dr. Abdullah Malkawi, the President of the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST), visited Sandia and Los Alamos National Laboratories in New Mexico, with support from the State Department's Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction. Dr. Malkawi toured a number of different laboratories at each institution, including the bioscience and genomics facilities at Los Alamos and Sandia's bio-risk training laboratory. Sandia and Los Alamos subject-matter experts are working with JUST to build two training facilities for bio-risk management and genomics within the Princess Haya Biotechnology Center, as part of a project jointly funded by the U.S., Canadian, and UK governments.

JUST President Dr. Malkawi (center) visits a geosciences exhibit at Sandia National Laboratories, with Alex Stolar (left) from the State Department's Office of Cooperative Threat Reduction, and Jen Gaudio (right), manager of Sandia's International Biological Threat Reduction program.

Jordanian Campaign Launched to Collect Electronic Waste, Raise Awareness on Disposal Methods

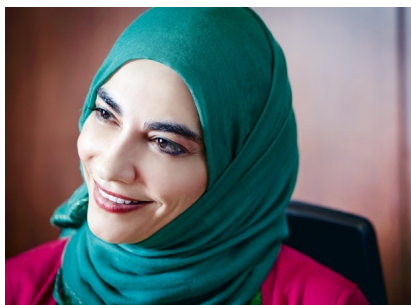
Jordanian Ministry of Environment launched a new campaign in April to collect electronic waste and guide the public on ways to properly handle it. The Ministry distributed 240 bins throughout the country to collect computers, cell phones, chargers, dry batteries, and fluorescent light bulbs. The Ministry also plans to evaluate current e-waste regulations for the safe disposal of electronic waste at the Swaqa landfill for hazardous waste. The second pillar includes training workers at the hazardous waste landfills and encouraging recycling, while the third pillar is about raising public awareness. *Photo shows collection site in front of the Ministry of Environment in Amman. Photo courtesy of Batir Wardum, Project Manager at UNDP Jordan.*



Oman Hosts Conference on Harmful Algal Blooms and Desalination

Muscat served as the venue for an international conference on harmful algal blooms (HABs) on April 16-17. The two-day conference was organized by USAID and the Middle East Desalination Research Center in partnership with the Omani Public Authority of Electricity and Water, UNESCO, and the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission. There are more than 14,000 desalination plants in more than 150 countries worldwide, so the event brought together experts to discuss the risks HABs pose to desalination plants by clogging filters and damaging reverse osmosis membranes. Scientists presented on a range of topics, including design considerations for desalination plants in areas subject to recurrent HABs, new technologies and approaches to HAB detection and forecasting, approaches to direct bloom control, and action plans or management strategies to follow during HAB outbreaks.

Dr. Hayat Suliman Sindi; March's Woman in Science Hall of Fame



HE Dr. Sindi. Photo courtesy of Embassy Riyadh

Dr. Sindi is one of the world's leading biotechnologists and a member of Saudi Arabia's Shura Council. She is the founder of the i2 Institute for Imagination and Ingenuity, a non-profit organization that seeks to create an ecosystem of entrepreneurship and social innovation for scientists, technologists and engineers in the Middle East. She earned her PhD in biotechnology, studying at King's College London, Cambridge, MIT, and Harvard University. She is a co-founder of Diagnostics For All, which offers cost-effective point-of-care diagnostic tools to treat patients living beyond the reach of traditional medical infrastructure. She has been named a National Geographic Emerging Explorer, a Global Ambassador for Vital Voices, one of the world's "150 Fearless Women" by *Newsweek/The Daily Beast*, and one of the Most Powerful and Influential Arab Women by *CEO* magazine.

Dr. Laila Abu Hassan, April's Woman in Science Hall of Fame Honoree

Dr. AbuHassan taught at the University of Jordan from 1970 until she was appointed a Senator in 2011. She pioneered the field of nanotechnology in Jordan and the Arab world through national, regional and international cooperation. She has focused on popularizing nanotechnology and helped organize a 2008 International Conference on Nanotechnology in Amman in collaboration with the U.S. National Science Foundation and the University of Illinois. Dr. AbuHassan holds three patents. In both her scientific and political careers, she has promoted high-technology research.



HE Dr. Abu Hassan. Photo courtesy of Embassy Amman

U.S. Ambassador to Jordan Stuart E. Jones and Her Royal Highness Princess Sumaya bint Al Hassan Honor Two Accomplished Jordanian Scientists in the Hall of Fame



From left: Prof. Al Bawwab, Dr. Ekhleif Tarawneh President of the University of Jordan, Ambassador Jones, HRH Princess Sumaya, and H.E. Dr. Abu Hassan. Photo courtesy of Embassy Amman

On April 24, Princess Sumaya University of Technology (PSUT), the local Jordanian partner in the Women in Science initiative, hosted the ceremony to honor the two 2014 Jordanian in Science Hall of Fame honorees. HRH Princess Sumaya Bint Al-Hassan and Ambassador Stuart E. Jones spoke at the event, which was attended by academics, business leaders, and young entrepreneurs. Local TV covered the event as well as several radio stations and magazines. Ro'aya TV's report can be seen here: http://jordan.usembassy.gov/esth_2014_wshf.html. For the TV interview follow: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gVPCzOX6-Bk&feature=youtu.be>.

Interested in U.S. Environmental Businesses and Exports?

Check out this Department of Commerce link: <http://export.gov/industry/environment/> And visit the U.S. Embassy Web site in your MENA country.

This report is published by Hub Officer Elizabeth Hattingh and Hub Specialist Yara Abu Laban, with contributions from U.S. missions in the region.

For more information about the ESTH Hubs and the State Department's Bureau of Oceans and International Environmental and Scientific Affairs (OES) please look up OES on [Facebook](#) and www.state.gov.